

Why Pride Causes Me Problems, Part 3 - 1 Corinthians 4:10-13 – September 14th, 2014

- Today's teaching will be part three of a series I've, titled, "Why Pride Causes Me Problems."
- By way of an introduction, I'd like to begin by asking a question, and as I do, please know that it's one for which I also ask of myself as well.
- Is my brand of Christianity one that thrives on being applauded by the world, or is it one that survives in spite of being rubbish to the world?

- I would suggest that the brand of Christianity in this Corinthian church was one that had been revised so as to more palatable to the world.
- Whereas, conversely, the Apostle Paul's brand of Christianity was one that had been despised, and as such, treated brutally by the world.
- I suppose the question becomes one of whether or not it's possible to build a bridge between both worlds as it were, without compromising.

For the answer to this question, we need look no further than to the Epistle of James 4:4–10 -- 4 You adulterous people, don't you know that friendship with the world means enmity against God? Therefore, anyone who chooses to be a friend of the world becomes an enemy of God. 5 Or do you think Scripture says without reason that he jealously longs for the spirit he has caused to dwell in us? 6 But he gives us more grace. That is why Scripture says: "God opposes the proud but shows favor to the humble." 7 Submit yourselves, then, to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you. 8 Come near to God and he will come near to you. Wash your hands, you sinners, and purify your hearts, you double-minded. 9 Grieve, mourn and wail. Change your laughter to mourning and your joy to gloom. 10 Humble yourselves before the Lord, and he will lift you up.

- What James writes here in his Epistle, echo's what Paul writes in his Epistle, such that you cannot have it both ways, it's one or the other.
- In other words, your brand of Christianity will either be user "friendly" for the world, or it will be stinging salt and blinding light to the world.
- It's interesting to note the world in Paul's day, and the world in our day, were very similar in the sense that they esteemed the same thing.

- Let me explain, the world despises the very thought of self-deprivation, and will do everything and stop at nothing to avoid any humiliation.
- Also, the world in that day, as well as today, views manual labor as beneath ones dignity, not to mention not fighting back as being weak.
- Sadly the church today seems to have bought into the notion that a successful church is one that appeals to and is applauded by the world.

One commentator said it best this way, "Today, the church is heavy with this same attitude of the Corinthian Christians. They were concerned about the image of worldly success and power, and many of them despised Paul and the other apostles because they did not display that image. Today, there is no shortage of ministers who want to display the image of worldly success and power, and no shortage of Christians who will only value that in their minister."

- This brings us to our text today in verses 10-13 where we find a 5th problem pride causes, which is that it makes me friends with the world.

5. Pride makes me friends with the world (Verses 10-13)

(10) We are fools for Christ, but you are so wise in Christ! We are weak, but you are strong! You are honored, we are dishonored! (11) To this very hour we go hungry and thirsty, we are in rags, we are brutally treated, we are homeless. (12) We work hard with our own hands. When we are cursed, we bless; when we are persecuted, we endure it; (13) when we are slandered, we answer kindly. Up to this moment we have become the scum of the earth, the refuse of the world.

- v10 Paul says we're fools for Christ, but they're wise in Christ, we're weak, they're strong, and they are honored, while we are dishonored.
- v11-12 He says we're hungry thirsty in rags brutally treated homeless and they work hard, bless when cursed, as they endure persecution.
- v13 He then say's, we answer kindly when slandered and up to this moment we've become the scum of the earth, the refuse of the world.

- Perhaps it goes without saying but every single one of these in Paul's contrasting list was and is absolutely despised by the world today.
- More specifically, the world sees the Christian as foolish, weak, and dishonored, in the sense that a Christian is not seen as prestigious.
- Simply put, the Christian, though more so in the Middle East and now beginning here in the US, is persecuted as the scum of the earth.

- As such, the question becomes, am I okay with this? Are you okay with this? Will yours and my brand of Christianity bear up under this?
- I'll take it a step further and ask this question, what if the Lord tarries and the rapture isn't as soon as we want it to be? Can you endure?
- Perhaps better asked, will my brand of Christianity be able to survive, were I the recipient of what other Christians are experiencing today?

- While I realize one may argue it's unlikely we here in America would drink from this cup, I think we would do well to consider the following:

- This year it was reported, "Christians are the world's most persecuted people" [The Independent, 2014]
- In January of this year, Fox News published an article with the headline, "Christians killed for faith nearly doubled in 2013, group finds."
- Also January 2014, The Jerusalem Post published an article, "Report: Persecution of Christians reveals most abuse in Muslim countries."
- Christianity.com stated, "More Christians were martyred in the 20th century than in all other centuries combined."
- Deseret News, 2011 posted that 105,000 Christians are martyred for their faith each year, (about 288 every day).
- In 2013, Reuters published a report stating that, "Currently over 100 million Christians are being persecuted worldwide."

- Here's the bottom line in closing, those who live godly will be persecuted, but there is hope for and a blessing to those who are persecuted.

Matthew 5:10–13 ¹⁰Blessed are those who are persecuted because of righteousness, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. ¹¹"Blessed are you when people insult you, persecute you and falsely say all kinds of evil against you because of me. ¹²Rejoice and be glad, because great is your reward in heaven, for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you.

2 Timothy 3:10–14 ¹⁰You, however, know all about my teaching, my way of life, my purpose, faith, patience, love, endurance, ¹¹persecutions, sufferings—what kinds of things happened to me in Antioch, Iconium and Lystra, the persecutions I endured. Yet the Lord rescued me from all of them. ¹²In fact, everyone who wants to live a godly life in Christ Jesus will be persecuted, ¹³while evildoers and impostors will go from bad to worse, deceiving and being deceived. ¹⁴But as for you, continue in what you have learned and have become convinced of, because you know those from whom you learned it,